

# FACT SHEET | Needed Investments Across Minnesota

## *2015 Budget for a Better Minnesota*

---

Governor Dayton's deficiency proposal would make needed investments to maintain basic services across the state. Without these funds, Minnesotans would see reduced access to the services they deserve and expect. From providing the necessary funding to help Minnesotans rebuild after last summer's floods, to protecting critical services that keep people safe, the Governor's budget proposal would make crucial investments in areas of need.

### Rebuilding After a Disaster

- **Responding to a Major Disaster** – Last summer, 37 counties and 3 tribal governments were declared a major disaster by President Obama following severe flooding. Three counties were not included in the President's declaration, but did qualify for help from a new state public assistance program.
- **Repairing Roads and Other Infrastructure** – The Governor's budget included \$11.88 million for flood and disaster relief and \$3 million as a 20 percent match for Federal Highway Administration emergency funds used by local governments to repair roads following the June 2014 flooding. This funding will help repair federal aid eligible roads, such as trunk highways, and county roads that are not eligible under FEMA.
- **Restoring Our Land** – The Governor's budget also sets aside \$2.4 million for the Board of Water and Soil Resources to repair damage to existing conservation areas.

### Preserving Access to Important Services

- **Ensuring Proper Enforcement of Outdoor Recreation Laws** – The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is facing a \$1.8 million deficit in its enforcement division and is leaving 28 field staff offices vacant. As a result, conservation officers have less capacity to respond to service calls in a timely manner. The DNR has already reduced training and fleet costs. Without the additional funds, Minnesotans would see decreased quality of outdoor recreation and tourism.
- **Responding to Public Health Threats** – In 2014, the Department of Health (MDH) worked diligently to protect Minnesotans from the global threat of Ebola. MDH conducted health monitoring for over 200 people who posed a potential Ebola risk. Numerous MDH staff were diverted to the Ebola response, and away from their regular work on federal grants. Without \$891,000 in deficiency funding, MDH would be unable to complete these federally-required activities and would have to repay the federal government. In addition to MDH's costs, the Governor's proposal would reimburse hospitals and emergency medical services \$2 million for costs they incurred on Ebola prevention efforts.
- **Minnesota Food Assistance Program** – The Minnesota Food Assistance Program was created by the Legislature to provide assistance to Minnesotans over age the age of 50 who do not qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. MFAP has been operating at a deficiency due to increased demand for the program. Without the Governor's budget provisions, approximately 445 Minnesotans – mostly seniors – would have reduced access to food as soon as April 2015.
- **Minnesota Zoo** – In 2014, the Minnesota Zoo faced rising operating costs resulting from increased fuel and heating prices. At the same time, the Zoo experienced a drop in attendance due to the uncommonly cold winter. The Zoo has reduced staff, but without additional funding they would have to close exhibits and relocate animals, which would further-reduce attendance. The Governor's proposal would provide \$1.5 million to address these needs.
- **Minnesota Security Hospital** – The Minnesota Security Hospital serves the specialized needs of patients who are committed to the state as mentally ill and dangerous. The program is currently functioning under two conditional licenses that require MSH to add more than 75 full-time positions in order to ensure the safety of patients and staff. DHS has implemented cost savings measures, but the agency does not have sufficient funding to cover the deficit. Without new funding, DHS would have to stop admitting patients and would be forced to reduce services.